

Gareth Johnson MP for Dartford



Reporting back from Dartford
and Westminster - now reaching
over 5,000 people in the local
area

3rd February 2020

Welcome to my latest newsletter.

Lower Thames Crossing

A further consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing is taking place for eight weeks from 29th January to 25th March 2020 and it will give people the chance to look at and comment on, changes made to the design of the project.

These changes have been made following feedback received from the 29,000 responses during the last consultation in 2018, together with new technical information following surveys and ground investigations.

Consultation events will be held at the following locations:

Consultation event locations in Kent

- Cascades Leisure Centre, Thong Lane, Gravesend DA12 4LG – Thursday 27th February 2020, 2pm-8pm

SURGERY DATES

By Appointment Only:

Bluewater

7th February

13th March

17th April



 [Website](#)

- Gravesham Civic Centre, Windmill Street, Gravesend DA12 1AU – Saturday 14th March 2020, Midday-6pm

Mobile Information Centre locations in Kent

- Chalk Parish Hall, Pirrip Close, Gravesend DA12 2ND – Wednesday 4th March 2020, 10am-7pm
- Higham Library Car Park, 8 Forge Lane ME3 7AS – Friday 6th March 2020, 10am-3pm
- Higham Train Station Car Park ME3 7JQ – Friday 6th March 2020, 4pm-7pm
- Gravesend Town Centre, King Street DA12 2XX – Saturday 7th March 2020, 10am-5pm
- Shorne Woods Country Park, Brewers Road, Shorne, Gravesend DA12 3HX – Sunday 8th March 2020, 11am-4pm
- Meadow Rooms, The Street, Cobham, Gravesend DA12 3BZ – Thursday 12th March 2020, 10am-3pm
- Sole Street Station Car Park, Cobham, Gravesend DA13 0XY – Thursday 12th March 2020, 4pm-7pm
- Shorne Village Hall Car Park, 16 The Street, Shorne, Gravesend DA12 3EA – Wednesday 18th March 2020, 10am-7pm

People can respond to the consultation by:

- Visiting one of 20 events along the proposed route
- Completing an online survey through the [Lower Thames Crossing consultation website](#)
- Posting a paper response form or letter to: Freepost LTC Consultation (*no stamp or additional address information needed*)



Ebbsfleet Garden City carbon-reducing housing scheme

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation recently approved Redrow's plans for 133 homes at Ebbsfleet Green.

The plans include a range of carbon-reduction measures including solar panels, sustainable drainage and electric vehicle charging points.

The proposed development will also include improved air-tightness and high-performance building fabrics and glazing and 100% low energy lighting.

- Sending an email to:
LTC.Consultation@Traverse.Ltd
- Responses must be received by 11.59pm
on 25 March 2020



Click on the photo to view the video on the LTC
Supplementary Consultation



EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill

This Bill has now received Royal Assent and we left
the EU on 31st January 2020.



Dartford Parkruns

I was pleased to hear from the Chair of Dartford Road Runners and the Event Director of Dartford Heath Parkrun, who contacted me about the popularity of the Parkruns which are organised entirely by volunteers.

The Dartford Parkrun takes place every Saturday at 9.00 am in Central Park, where runners complete a 5 km course against the clock. People of all abilities take part and can run at their own pace. Afterwards, those taking part usually grab a coffee in Dartford Harriers' Clubhouse.

In June 2016, nearly two-thirds of people in the area voted to leave the EU.

More negotiations are needed to determine our future relationship with the EU at the end of the implementation period this year.

Brexit has dominated British politics for the past few years and has been a divisive issue. We will now, though, be able to concentrate on other important issues in Parliament and set laws ourselves that were previously determined by the EU.



Smart motorways

I was amongst a group of MPs calling for more safety measures on smart motorways during a debate in the House of Commons. During the debate I raised the issue of whether workers in recovery vehicles should be permitted to use red lights rather than the amber ones they use at the moment.

This follows a meeting I had last year with staff from Dynes Motor Group, a roadside rescue and recovery business based in Dartford. I have been pleased to support Dynes in their Campaign for

As well as the Dartford Parkrun, there is one on Dartford Heath, over the same distance, which is also held every Saturday at 9.00 am.

For younger runners, Dartford Junior Parkrun is a 2 km event for 4-14 year olds and is held in Central Park every Sunday at 9.00 am.

All these events are free and the only requirement is that you must register before you first run.

Volunteers for these Parkruns are always needed and if you would like to help out or just find more information, please click on the link below.

[Dartford Parkruns](#)

Safer Roadside Rescue Recovery, which was set up following the death of one of their employees, who was tragically killed whilst carrying out a roadside recovery.

As well as raising awareness about the dangers roadside recovery operators face, campaigners want to see workers allowed to use prominent red lights whilst attending accidents and breakdowns, rather than an amber light currently in use.

The debate highlighted the dangers to motorists and both recovery and emergency workers using smart motorways. If these motorways are to continue to be a regular feature, then we have to protect the people who use them. The lack of a continuous hard shoulder makes it very challenging for recovery drivers to help motorists who have broken down or been involved in an accident. I have seen some terrifying footage of incidents where recovery workers have nearly been killed and we know that several people have lost their lives when helping motorists who are stranded. We have to do more to make this new type of road safer if they are going to be used in the future.

To play the video footage of this debate, please click on the photo above.



Countering Terrorism

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, recently announced a new approach to countering terrorism.

The new Counter-Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill will be introduced in the first 100 days of this new Government. It will include measures that will force dangerous terrorist offenders, who receive extended determinate sentences, to serve their whole sentence behind bars. It will also introduce a new statutory minimum sentence of 14 years in prison which can be applied to those convicted of the most serious terrorist offences.



High Speed 1 - rolling stock

At a recent debate in the House of Commons, I joined other Kent MPs in calling for more trains and carriages on the High Speed 1 rail line in a bid to tackle overcrowding and high costs.

During the course of his reply to the debate, the Minister stated that the popularity of HS1 had led to significant growth in passenger numbers and that it is a very successful, normally very good and reliable railway. He also reported that the Williams Rail Review will be published in the next couple of months. He said it is intended to put the railway on a long-term, sustainable footing, where the passenger is put first. It is important that the next franchise award reflects that and fits into whatever the Williams Review might suggest.

Additionally, a major overhaul of prisons and probation will introduce tougher monitoring conditions and will double the number of counter-terrorism probation officers.

Funding for counter-terrorism will grow to £906m in 2020-21; a £90m year-on-year increase.

The Government will also review the support available to the victims of terrorism, as well as their families and loved ones and immediately invest £500k to increase the support provided by the Victims of Terrorism Unit, ensuring more victims get the support and advice they need, faster.



Sentencing debate

The draft Release of Prisoners (Alteration of Relevant Proportion of Sentence) Order 2019 proposes legislation to ensure the most serious violent and sexual offenders will spend at least two-thirds of their sentence in prison rather than half their sentence, which is currently the case.

During the debate on this subject, I raised with the Justice Minister my support for this proposal but also asked for more to be done.

This legislation implements the manifesto commitment we had at the General Election and ensures the most serious offenders spend more of their sentence behind bars.

We have an ongoing commitment to the victims of crime and we need to see more occasions where the sentence given by the Court more accurately reflects the time actually served.

To see my question and the Minister's response, please click on the video above.

*Gareth Johnson MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA*

Stalking Protection Orders (SPOs)

On 20th January 2020, powerful new orders came into force enabling police forces to better protect victims of stalking.

SPOs can ban stalkers from approaching or contacting their victims and can also force them to seek professional help.

The Orders will usually last for a minimum of 2 years, with a breach counting as a criminal offence that can result in up to 5 years in prison.

In addition to the SPOs, courts can now also impose an interim SPO to provide immediate protection for victims whilst a decision is being made.

Tel: 0207 219 7047

email: gareth.johnson.mp@parliament.uk

Copyright © 2019, Gareth Johnson MP, All rights reserved.

According to the Crime Survey for England and Wales, almost one in five women over the age of 16 has experienced stalking, as well as almost one in ten men.